

CARMEN'S MESSENGER

(Continued from page 15.)

He sent Pete to an inn farther on, because it seemed advisable that they should not be seen together, although he would have liked to know the man was about. After dinner, he sat in a quiet room in the smoking-room, reading the newspapers and keeping his gloves hand out of sight, until it was time to go to bed.

CHAPTER XVIII Spadeadam Waste

About eleven o'clock next morning, Foster stopped at the top of a hill and sitting down on a broken wall lighted his pipe. In front, the undulating military road ran straight across the high tableland to the west. To the south, a deep hollow, the bottom of which he could not see, marked the course of the Tyne. Plumes of smoke rose out of the valley and trailed languidly across the sky, for the river flowed past well-cultivated fields, old-fashioned villages, and rows of sooty cottages that clustered round plithed towers. Human activity had set its stamp upon the sheltered dale, alike in scenes of quiet pastoral beauty and industrial ugliness.

It was different to the north, where the shaggy brown moors rolled back in bleak, dark ridges. There were no white farmsteads here; one looked across a lonely waste that had sheltered the wolf and the Infting Pict when the Romans named the Wall, and long afterwards offered a refuge to outlaws and cattle thieves. Foster's way led through this desolation, but his map indicated a road of a kind that ran north to the head of Liddel. He must decide whether he should take it or plunge into the wilds. Since Graham was in front of him, he had probably gone to Liddesdale, with the object of finding if Foster was at the Garth. If he did not come back by the road he had taken, he would watch the railway that roughly followed it across the moors from Hexham, which seemed to close the latter to Foster and make it dangerous for him to go near the Garth at all. Nevertheless he meant to see Alice before he looked for Daly and he turned to Pete.

"On the whole, I'd sooner keep off the road. Is there a way across the heath to the upper Liddel?" "I wouldn't say there's a way," Pete answered with a dry smile. "But I can take you over the Spadeadam waste, if ye do not mind the soft flows and some vera rough travelling. Then I'll no promise that we'll win farther than Bewcastle to-night, an' if there's much water in the burns, we'll maybe no get there."

They struck across a rushy field, crept through a ragged hedge, and came out upon rough pasture that presently merged into the heath. A green bank and a straggling line of stones, some fallen in large masses and some standing two or three feet high, presently stretched across their path, and Foster stopped for a few moments. The bank and most-like hollow he looked down upon marked the vallum; the squared stones, to which the line still clung, apparently undetachable, the murae. He was looking at the great rampart a Roman emperor had built. He understood that it was higher and less damaged farther west and would have liked to follow it, but he had something else to think about than antiquities. The heath got rougher when they left the Wall. Spongy moss grew among the ling that caught their feet, and the ground began to rise. Looking at the sun, Foster saw they were not taking as northerly a line as he had expected, but the back of a bold ridge rose between them and the west and he supposed Pete meant to follow its other side. They stopped to eat the food they had brought where a stream had worn away a hollow in a bank and the sun, striking the wall of peaty soil behind them, was pleasantly warm. It was a calm day, with slowly-drifting clouds, and grey shadows streaked the wide, brown waste.

There was no house in sight and only in one place a few scattered dots that looked like sheep. Getting out his cap, Foster noted they were crossing the high neck where the Pennine range slopes down to meet the southern spurs of the Cheviots. He had seen nothing in Canada wilder or more desolate than this bleak tableland. In the afternoon, they toiled up and had not noticed in the distance, winding in and out among soft places and hummocks of the peat, but when they came to the top there was not the dip to a valley he had expected. The ground was rougher than before, the moor rolled on, rising and falling in healthy undulations. As they went on, however, it was obvious that they had crossed the watershed and were descending, for streams that increased in size crossed their path. So far, none were deep, but the ravines they ran through began to seem the gradual slope that Foster understood Pete's remark that

something depended on there being much water in the burns.

Looking back after a time, he saw the crest of the moor run up behind them against the sky, and the next ravine they came to was awkward to climb down, while he was wet to the knees when he crossed the burn. A mile farther on, he reached another that was worse and they had to work back along the crumbling edges of its channel to find a place to cross. After this their progress was marked by erratic curves, and Foster was soon splashed with black peat-mud and green slime. By and by they came to a broad level, shut in by a ridge on its other side, and picked their way carefully between clumps of rushes and curious round holes filled with dark-coloured water. The ground was very soft and walking became a toil, but Pete held steadily to his winding course and Foster, who was getting tired, did his best to follow.

They were some time crossing the bog and when they reached the foot of the rise, which ran in a long line between them and the west, the light got dimmer suddenly. A yellow glow that seemed to come from low down flushed the sky, but the rough slope was dark and the hummocks and gullies on its side were losing their distinctness. Foster felt somewhat daunted by the prospect of pushing across the waste after darkness fell, and doggedly kept level with Pete as they went up the hill obliquely, struggling through tangled grass and wiry heath. When they reached the summit, he saw they were on the western edge of the tableland but some distance below its highest point. Though it was broken by rolling elevations, the ground ran gradually down to an extensive plain where white mist lay in the hollows. A belt of saffron light lingered on the horizon, with a half-moon in a streak of green above, and one or two twinkling points showed, faint and far off, in the valley.

"You," said Pete, "is Bewcastle dale, and I ken where we'll find a welcome when we cross the water o' Lide. But I'm thinking we'll keep the big flow in our left han'." Instead of descending towards the distant farmsteads, he followed the summit of the rise, and Foster, who understood that a flow is a soft bog, plodded after him without objecting. The heather was tangled and rough, and hid the stones he now and then stumbled against, but it was better to hurry than be left with a long distance to cover in the dark. Indeed as he caught his feet in the wiry stems and fell into holes, he frankly admitted the absurdity of his adventure, a sense of which amused him now and then. He was in a highly civilized country, there were railways and telegraph lines not far off, and he was lurking like an ancient outlaw among the bogst. It looked as if there must be better ways of meeting his difficulties, but he could not see one. Anyhow, he had determined to save his partner, and now, if his plans were hazy and not very wise, it was too late to make a sweeping change.

After a time Pete stopped abruptly, and then dropping into a clump of heather, pointed backwards down the long slope on their right hand. Foster's sight was good but he admitted that the poacher's was better, because it was a minute or two before he saw any ground for alarm. Although there was some light in the sky, the rough descent was dark and it was only by degrees he distinguished something that moved across the heath, below and some distance away. Then he realized that it was a man, and another became faintly visible. They might be shepherds or sportsmen, but it was significant that there were two and they seemed to be ascending obliquely, as if to cut his line of march. He remembered that as he and Pete had kept the crest of the ridge, their figures must have shown, small but sharp, against the fading light.

"It's suspicious, but I wouldn't like to say they're on our trail," he remarked. "We'll soon ken. Watch the bit scar."

Foster saw a faint dark line down the hill, and supposed it was a gully, torn out of the peat. It ran nearly straight up, crossing the strangers' oblique course to the summit, and would make a very rough means of ascent, but if they entered it the men would be out of sight. He blamed himself for not looking back before and hummocks of the peat, but when they came to the top there was not the dip to a valley he had expected. The ground was rougher than before, the moor rolled on, rising and falling in healthy undulations. As they went on, however, it was obvious that they had crossed the watershed and were descending, for streams that increased in size crossed their path. So far, none were deep, but the ravines they ran through began to seem the gradual slope that Foster understood Pete's remark that

found Foster's track. Chance, however, sometimes favoured one in a curious way; the fellow might have found out that he had left the road and, expected him to stop the night in Bewcastle dale. Since Foster had Pete with him, he was not, in one the fellow was, no doubt, dangerous. He was not likely to force an equal fight. The risk would come if Graham found him alone and at a disadvantage, when Foster thought it would go hard with him. This was why he could not have the men on his track, watching for the right moment to strike. It was, however, possible that the strangers were police, and he lay in the heath with knitted brows until Pete touched him.

"They wouldn't find us easy if we kept still, but I'm no' for spending the night among the bells," he said. "I'm thinking we'll try the big flow and lose them in the mire." He rose and crossing the summit started down the incline, while Foster followed as fast as he could. It would be some time before the others reached the spot they had left, but the light of the sinking moon touched the face of the hill and as long as they were moving their figures could be seen. When they reached the bottom Pete headed west, and presently stopped at the edge of a wide level space. Tufts of wild cotton gleamed lividly in the moonlight and here and there a sparkle marked a pool, farther on, a trail of mist stretched across the bog. It did not look inviting, and when Pete stopped for a few moments Foster heard the water bubble through the wet-moss in which his feet sank.

"The black burn runs on the other side, and there's just one place where ye can cross," Pete said thoughtfully. "An old shieling stands on a bit dry knoll near the middle o' the flow, and I wouldn't say but we might spend the night there, if it was needful." Foster left it to him, although he was not much attracted by the thought of spending the night in the bog, and Pete moved forward cautiously. He seemed to be following a track, because he went straight ahead, tramping through clumps of rushes, and splashing into pools. Foster noted that the latter were shallow, though he had fallen into bog-holes that were deep. They tried to move silently, but they made some noise, and he felt relieved when they plunged into a belt of mist that would hide them from their pursuers. By the look of the ground to left and right, he imagined that a stranger who lost the track would have serious trouble in regaining firm soil.

When they came out of the mist, however, he began to find the silence daunting. On the hills, one could hear the grouse and plover crying and the murmur of running water, but an oppressive quietness brooded over the flow. Nor could he see much except rushes, treacherous moss, and dully-glimmering pools. By and by, however, a dark mass loomed through the haze and Pete, who stopped, looked back. For a moment or two Foster heard nothing, and then there was a splash and a noise, as if somebody was floundering through the rushes. The sounds were nearer than he had thought possible, and he looked at his companion.

"They're no' travelling badly and they're keepit the track so far," Pete remarked. "Maybe ye wouldn't care to try their speed for the next two or three miles?" "Certainly not," said Foster; "that is, if there's another way." "Weel," said Pete, "they're sure ly nearer than I thought, and might see where we crossed the burn. There's noought for't but the shieling on the knove." He went on, and the dark mass ahead grew into a rocky mound covered with small trees. They were birches, because Foster saw their drooping, lacelike twigs above the low mist, and the indistinct object among their stems was the shieling. It was obvious that the but would catch the eyes of the men behind if they came close enough, and he stopped where the ground rose.

"We'll no gang in yet," said Pete. They skirted the mound, which was larger than Foster thought and broken by out-cropping rock, and when a thick screen of the birches rose between them and the building, crept into a nook among the stones. Foster imagined that the others might search for half the night without finding them unless they were lucky. Then Pete remarked in a meaning tone: "There's just the twa, and I hae a good stick."

Foster smiled. He was tired, wet, and savage, and would have liked to confront Graham and settle their differences by force; but the matter could not be treated in this primitive way. He could not shoot the men, and would be no better off if he overpowered and threw them in the bog. They would know where he was and would follow him as close as was safe, while he wanted

to shake them off and make them uncertain whether they were on his track or not. Besides, they might avoid a conflict.

"The thing's too complicated to be straightened out by knocking somebody down," he said. "But I'm glad I'm not here alone." In the meantime, the others were getting nearer, for Foster heard them splash through the wet moss and stumble among the bushy grass. They were walking fast, which indicated that they thought themselves some distance behind the fugitives; but stopped when they saw the birches, and then came on again cautiously. Foster could not see them until their blurred figures appeared among the trees. So long as he kept still there was little chance of his being found.

The moonlight filtered through the low mist, which rose half-way up the thin birch trunks on the top of the mound, but the shieling stood on a lower level, and when they went towards it the men's forms got very indistinct. They vanished, but he knew they had gone in when a pale stream of light flickered among the trees.

"A policeman's trick," Pete said in a low voice. "A poacher would not ha' let ye see the light."

Foster felt that he must find out who the men were. The thing was risky, but it was worth trying, and he crawled out from behind the stones. The rock was rough and wet; his hand plunged into some water and he scraped his knee, but he made a few yards and then stopped and lay flat as the light went out. It looked as if the others had heard him, and he lowered his head until his face was buried in withered fern. There was silence for a few moments, and then his nerves tingled as he heard steps; the men, he thought, were coming out to look for him. He did not move, however, and the footsteps got farther off. By and by there was a sharp rustle and he cautiously looked up. Two hazy figures showed among the trees, but it was plain that they were going away.

It was impossible to follow them without being heard, and he waited until Pete joined him. So far as he could judge by the noise they made, the men were hurrying across the bog. "They're gwa', but I wouldn't say they'll no come back," Pete remarked. "If they dinna strike the right place, they'll no find it easy to cross the burn. She rins in a deep cut an' the bottom's soft." "What's likely to happen if they get off the track?" "Weel," said Pete, with a chuckle "it's vera possible they'll stop in the flow till morning, maybe up to the knees in mire. I dinna think there's much reason they should get in deeper, but they might."

"But suppose they find the way and cross the burn?" "Then, if they ken the country, I would expect them to head a bit south for Shoptord, where they would find an inn, or maybe wet by the Clattering ford to Canonbie. If they dinna ken, it's likely they'll hae to sleep behind a dyke. Noo, however, we'll turn back and gang up the dale."

They recrossed the bog and skirted the moor for some time, after which they went down a long slope and reached a level space of grass and heath. They followed it north until a light shone ahead and the barking of dogs indicated that they were approaching a farm. Pete went in first, and Foster did not know what explanation he gave, but the farmer told him to sit down when he entered the big, flagged kitchen. He was not surprised when a woman who came in looked at him curiously, because he was wet, and splashed, and bits of fern and heather stuck to his clothes, but his hosts asked no questions and presently gave him supper.

Soon afterwards he was shown a comfortable room and went to bed, leaving Pete with the others in the kitchen. Foster was glad to feel he could be trusted not to tell them too much, although he would, no doubt, have to satisfy their curiosity to some extent. A hint went a long way with the reserved Borders.

CHAPTER XIX Alice's Confidence

Foster got up late and after breakfast sat by the kitchen fire, studying his map. He imagined that his pursuers, believing him to be in front, would have crossed the low ground towards the cultivated valley of the Esk, where they would not have trouble in finding shelter for the night. Then, if they thought he was making for the Garth, the railway would take them up Liddesdale. He meant to visit the Garth, although this might prove dangerous if Graham and his companion watched the neighbourhood. So long as Pete was close at hand, the risk might be great, but Pete could not be with him always and he thought Graham would stick at nothing to

get his papers back. One of the gang had killed Fred Hulton, and Foster did not suppose the others would hesitate about getting rid of him, if it could be done without putting the police on their track. A shot or stab in the dark would effectually prevent his betraying them, and it might be made to look like an accident, or perhaps as if he had killed himself. Foster, as a rule, distrusted anything that looked abnormal or sensational, but admitted that he might be in some danger. For all that, he was going. There was no need for an early start, because he did not want to arrive in daylight and the distance was not great. Then he meant to avoid the high roads, and after a talk with Pete picked out his route across the hills. It was eleven o'clock when they set off, and they spent an hour sheltering behind a dyke while a snowstorm broke upon the moor. The snow was wet and did not lie, but the soaked grass and ling afterwards clung about their feet and made walking laborious. The sky was grey and lowering and there was a bitter wind, but they pushed on across the high moors, and when the light was going saw a gap in a long ridge in front. Foster thought this marked the way down to the Garth.

It was nearly dark when they reached the gap, through which a brown stream flowed, and he could see nothing except dim hillsides and the black trough of the hollow. Pete said they must follow the water, and they stumbled downhill among the stones beside the burn. As they descended, a valley opened up and a rough track began at a stone sheepfold. Although it was dark, Foster saw that they were now crossing a rough pasture, and they had to stop every now and then to open a gate. The stream was swelling with tributaries from the hills and began to roar among the stones. Birches clustered in the hollows, the track became a road, and at length a group of lights twinkled across a fir wood and he knew the Garth was not far ahead.

Now he had got there, he almost wished he had kept away. He was not sure of his welcome and did not know what line to take if Featherstone showed his doubts. For one thing, he did not mean to talk about his adventures in Newcastle and on Spadeadam waste. The affair was too theatrical for the unimaginative country gentleman to believe, and for that matter, when Foster went up the drive past the well-kept shrubberies and lawn he found it hard to realize that he had been hunted by determined men and was now perhaps in danger of his life. Featherstone, living in his quiet house, could not be expected to credit such a romantic tale. Graham's letters would to some extent corroborate his statements, but unless Featherstone accepted his surmises as correct; but Foster admitted that after all pride was his strongest motive for saying nothing. If Featherstone distrusted him, he must continue to do so until Foster's efforts to help his son were successful.

He braced his courage when he rang the bell, but John, who let him in, did not seem to find anything remarkable in his choice of a companion. Pete looked very big and rather truculent in his rough, wet clothes, but he was not embarrassed. "This is a friend of mine," said Foster. "I should be obliged if you will look after him." John showed no surprise at this statement. "Very good, sir; I think I can promise that. Will you give me your coat, sir?" Then he beckoned Pete. "If you please, come with me."

He took Pete away and Foster wondered, with some amusement, what they thought of one another. A few moments afterwards Alice came in, dressed with a conjugal elegance that he thought suited her. Alice needed no ornaments and trinkeries would have struck a jarring note. Foster sometimes called her stately, though he felt that this was not quite what he meant. She had a certain quiet grace, touched with pride, that he admitted that his knowledge of girls like Alice Featherstone was small. Now, however, she was not as calm as usual, for her eyes had a keen sparkle and her look was animated. He wondered whether he could believe this was because she was glad to see him.

"You have not been long," she said with a welcoming smile. "Have you succeeded?" "On the whole, I think so," Foster answered modestly. "That's splendid!" she exclaimed in her voice. It sounded as if she showed her satisfaction with the consequences of his exploit.

"Weel," he said, "I haven't got very far yet, although I imagine I'm on the right line. But have you heard from Lawrence?" "No," she replied and her satisfaction vanished. Indeed, Foster was somewhat puzzled by the change. "I must confess that I'm getting anxious now." Foster nodded. "Then I must go and look for him as soon as I've had a reckoning with Daly." "Daly has been here—," she said and stopped as Mr. Featherstone came in. The latter looked at Foster rather curiously, but gave him his hand and seemed to take it for granted that he meant to resume his stay. She said her husband had gone to dine with a neighbour and would be back for two or three hours, and then let Foster go to his room.

Dinner was served soon after he came down, but while they talked freely about matters of no importance Foster noted a subtle difference in Mrs. Featherstone's manner. She was not less friendly than usual, but she asked no questions about his journey and avoided mentioning Lawrence. It looked as if she knew her husband's doubts, but Foster somehow thought she did not altogether share them. In the meantime, he tried to act as if their relations were perfectly normal, but found it hard, and now and then, glanced at the clock. It was a long way to the nearest inn and he wondered when Featherstone would return, because he could not accept the hospitality of a man who distrusted him.

When dinner was over, he went with the others to the drawing-room and did his best to engage them in careless talk. Alice supported him when his efforts flagged, as they sometimes did, and once or twice gave him a half-amused, half-sympathetic glance. He did not know if he was grateful for this or not, but saw that she knew what he felt. If Mrs. Featherstone guessed, she made no sign; she treated him with the graciousness one would expect from a well-bred hostess, but went no further. It was a relief when Featherstone came in. He made a little abrupt movement when he saw Foster, to whom he did not give his hand. The latter, who felt somewhat awkward, thought he looked disturbed. "She means that Lawrence is not a simpleton," Mrs. Featherstone interposed. "For myself, I doubt if Mr. Foster could deceive him." "We'll go on," Featherstone resumed, turning to Foster. "There was a very mysterious affair at Gardner's Crossing shortly before you left and some valuable bonds were missing." Foster's face got red, but he laughed. "This is too much, sir! If your suspicions went so far, why did you not tell the police?" "Ah!" said Featherstone with some awkwardness, "there you have me at a disadvantage! While Daly has the power to injure Lawrence, I must keep the police in the dark." He paused and added: "I cannot say I believed you reckoned on this." "Thank you," said Foster, but Alice broke in: "Why don't you tell my father why you went to Newcastle?" Featherstone gave her a surprised glance and then turned to Foster. "It looks as if my daughter was better informed than me. There is obviously something I do not know about."

"No," she replied and her satisfaction vanished. Indeed, Foster was somewhat puzzled by the change. "I must confess that I'm getting anxious now."

Foster nodded. "Then I must go and look for him as soon as I've had a reckoning with Daly." "Daly has been here—," she said and stopped as Mr. Featherstone came in. The latter looked at Foster rather curiously, but gave him his hand and seemed to take it for granted that he meant to resume his stay. She said her husband had gone to dine with a neighbour and would be back for two or three hours, and then let Foster go to his room.

Dinner was served soon after he came down, but while they talked freely about matters of no importance Foster noted a subtle difference in Mrs. Featherstone's manner. She was not less friendly than usual, but she asked no questions about his journey and avoided mentioning Lawrence. It looked as if she knew her husband's doubts, but Foster somehow thought she did not altogether share them. In the meantime, he tried to act as if their relations were perfectly normal, but found it hard, and now and then, glanced at the clock. It was a long way to the nearest inn and he wondered when Featherstone would return, because he could not accept the hospitality of a man who distrusted him.

When dinner was over, he went with the others to the drawing-room and did his best to engage them in careless talk. Alice supported him when his efforts flagged, as they sometimes did, and once or twice gave him a half-amused, half-sympathetic glance. He did not know if he was grateful for this or not, but saw that she knew what he felt. If Mrs. Featherstone guessed, she made no sign; she treated him with the graciousness one would expect from a well-bred hostess, but went no further. It was a relief when Featherstone came in. He made a little abrupt movement when he saw Foster, to whom he did not give his hand. The latter, who felt somewhat awkward, thought he looked disturbed. "She means that Lawrence is not a simpleton," Mrs. Featherstone interposed. "For myself, I doubt if Mr. Foster could deceive him." "We'll go on," Featherstone resumed, turning to Foster. "There was a very mysterious affair at Gardner's Crossing shortly before you left and some valuable bonds were missing."

Foster's face got red, but he laughed. "This is too much, sir! If your suspicions went so far, why did you not tell the police?" "Ah!" said Featherstone with some awkwardness, "there you have me at a disadvantage! While Daly has the power to injure Lawrence, I must keep the police in the dark." He paused and added: "I cannot say I believed you reckoned on this." "Thank you," said Foster, but Alice broke in: "Why don't you tell my father why you went to Newcastle?" Featherstone gave her a surprised glance and then turned to Foster. "It looks as if my daughter was better informed than me. There is obviously something I do not know about."

"There is; but I must ask Miss Featherstone to respect my confidence in the meantime," Foster answered, and getting up, stood silent for a few moments, resting his hand on his chair. He saw restrained curiosity in Mrs. Featherstone's face, and her husband's anger, while he thought Alice knew how significant the line she had taken looked. She had boldly admitted that he knew her well enough to trust her with his secrets, and declared herself on his side. In the meantime, he was conscious of a strain that he thought the others felt and was sorry for Featherstone. He could not regret the man's anxiety about his son. For all that, he did not mean to tell him why he had gone to Newcastle. It would not make a plausible tale.

"I must own that things look bad for me," he said. "I can't offer any explanation that would satisfy you and could not expect you to take my word that I mean well. All I can do is to tighten off Daly and then find Lawrence, and I'm going to try." "It doesn't matter much to me, but I don't mean to tell him why he had gone to Newcastle. It would not make a plausible tale." "I must own that things look bad for me," he said. "I can't offer any explanation that would satisfy you and could not expect you to take my word that I mean well. All I can do is to tighten off Daly and then find Lawrence, and I'm going to try." "It doesn't matter much to me, but I don't mean to tell him why he had gone to Newcastle. It would not make a plausible tale."

Alice turned to her father with an angry sparkle in her eyes. "That's a very grudging concession for us to make. We will not blame Mr. Foster when he has proved that it's impossible for him to be guilty!" The tension was too great for any of them to be much surprised by her outbreak and Featherstone said dutifully: "It's logical!" "Logical!" Alice exclaimed in a scornful tone. "Do you expect Mr. Foster to be satisfied with that, after what he has borne and the risks he has run for us? Now, when things look bad for him, is the time for you to show your trust and knowledge of

character?" "You imply that your judgment is better than mine?" Featherstone rejoined, but without heat. "I know an honest man," Alice said quietly, with some colour in her face. There was silence for a few moments and by an effort of self-control Foster kept his face unmoved. He did not mean to let the others see the exultant satisfaction the girl's statement had given him. Featherstone brooded with knitted brows and a troubled look. Then he said: "You will understand, Mr. Foster, that this has been a painful interview to my wife and me. You were our guest and my son's friend; but I do not know what has happened and we have no news of him. If you can bring him back, I will ask your forgiveness for all that I have said." "I will do my best and get to work to-morrow," Foster answered. Then bowing to Mrs. Featherstone and Alice, who gave him a look that made his heart beat, he went out of the room. Shortly afterwards he entered the hall, wearing his damp walking clothes, and met Mrs. Featherstone, who protested against his leaving them at night. Foster answered that he had no time to lose and beckoning Pete, who was waiting, went out. Alice had not come down to bid him good-bye, but after all, he had not expected this; the meeting would not have been free from embarrassment. He had much to say to her, but must wait until he had kept his promise. He did not blame Featherstone and rather sympathized with him, but could not stay at the Garth or come back there until he had cleared up the mystery about his comrade's silence. Pete did not grumble much when they went down the drive, but said he had no friends in the neighbourhood and it was a long way to the nearest inn.

CHAPTER XX The Right Track

It was a clear night and although the moon was low its light touched the wet road as Foster walked down the dale. He had much to think about and tried to fix his mind on his main object. It would have been delightful to dwell upon Alice's interposition on his behalf, but he must not attach too much importance to this yet; after all she might have been actuated mainly by a love of justice. Besides, the sooner he kept his promise, the sooner he would be able to ask her what she had meant. He must find Daly and, though it significant that the fellow's attempt at extortion had not been very determined, if Featherstone was right about this, it indicated that Daly suspected that Lawrence was beyond his reach and had not been at the Garth. It was possible that he had found out how he had been misled and meant to look for his victim in Canada. Foster wondered whether he would go without his money, or if he had received a share of the plunder before, since the circular cheque was not for a large sum. In any case, it was lucky that Daly had visited the Garth when he did, because if he had waited another day, he might have met Graham, which would have been awkward.

After thought, Foster decided to act on the supposition that Daly would return to Canada. Then, dismissing this matter for the time, he speculated about the possibility of his accomplices lurking in the neighbourhood and began to look ahead. A stone dyke, broken in places, ran between the winding road and the stream it followed; on the other side, which lay in shadow, thin birches straggled up a steep hill. The moon was low and would soon sink behind the trees, when it would be very dark. When he looked back he could not see the lights of the Garth. He was on the road to the station, and remembered that there was a train from the south in the evening.

Taking out his watch, he calculated that anybody who left the station on foot when the train arrived might be expected to reach the Garth in the next quarter of an hour. This was disturbing, but he saw nothing to cause him alarm as he went on. Now and then a rabbit, startled by his footsteps, ran across the road, and once or twice an owl hooted as it fluttered overhead. The river splashed among the stones and sometimes the shadows moved as a puff of wind came up the valley; but that was all. Still Foster quickened his pace; it was some distance to the village where he knew of a good inn, and he wanted to get there before the people went to bed. He would not admit that he shrank from being left in the dark when the moon sank. By and by Pete stopped to relight his pipe and uttered an exclamation: (To be Continued)

CHAPTER XX The Right Track

It was a clear night and although the moon was low its light touched the wet road as Foster walked down the dale. He had much to think about and tried to fix his mind on his main object. It would have been delightful to dwell upon Alice's interposition on his behalf, but he must not attach too much importance to this yet; after all she might have been actuated mainly by a love of justice. Besides, the sooner he kept his promise, the sooner he would be able to ask her what she had meant. He must find Daly and, though it significant that the fellow's attempt at extortion had not been very determined, if Featherstone was right about this, it indicated that Daly suspected that Lawrence was beyond his reach and had not been at the Garth. It was possible that he had found out how he had been misled and meant to look for his victim in Canada. Foster wondered whether he would go without his money, or if he had received a share of the plunder before, since the circular cheque was not for a large sum. In any case, it was lucky that Daly had visited the Garth when he did, because if he had waited another day, he might have met Graham, which would have been awkward.

After thought, Foster decided to act on the supposition that Daly would return to Canada. Then, dismissing this matter for the time, he speculated about the possibility of his accomplices lurking in the neighbourhood and began to look ahead. A stone dyke, broken in places, ran between the winding road and the stream it followed; on the other side, which lay in shadow, thin birches straggled up a steep hill. The moon was low and would soon sink behind the trees, when it would be very dark. When he looked back he could not see the lights of the Garth. He was on the road to the station, and remembered that there was a train from the south in the evening.

Taking out his watch, he calculated that anybody who left the station on foot when the train arrived might be expected to reach the Garth in the next quarter of an hour. This was disturbing, but he saw nothing to cause him alarm as he went on. Now and then a rabbit, startled by his footsteps, ran across the road, and once or twice an owl hooted as it fluttered overhead. The river splashed among the stones and sometimes the shadows moved as a puff of wind came up the valley; but that was all. Still Foster quickened his pace; it was some distance to the village where he knew of a good inn, and he wanted to get there before the people went to bed. He would not admit that he shrank from being left in the dark when the moon sank. By and by Pete stopped to relight his pipe and uttered an exclamation: (To be Continued)

The Oil of the People.—Many oils have come and gone, but Dr. Thomas' Eucletic Oil continues to maintain its position and increase its sphere of usefulness each year. Its sterling qualities have brought it to the front and kept it there, and it can truly be called the oil of the people. Thousands have benefited by it and would use no other preparation.

ESTABLISHED

WITNESSES Sensation

BRITISH BANK SAY "IT'S"

Believe The Worst Depression Has Reached

OUTLOOK IS BE Some Even Say The Has Been "Bad Time"

LONDON, Feb. 22.—(ed Press).—Many British industrial leaders believe the worst of the depression in this country reached and that the bright.

At the annual meeting of Liverpool and Manchester, Edward P. Smith, the president of the existing trade depression, said that the power of the depression is to emerge at no distant date, but that the difficulties through.

He said there were many features and a good sound business was in various directions. This was coming down gradually in price in many while it caused serious individual business was in other sections of the.

Exchange Move F He pointed to the American exchange factor and said, while a few failures, the fact had been so general that a great tribute to the stability of the country.

Frank H. Hooper, the London Shipping agent at the annual meeting said: "My hope and the present depression, done had that we may see a little rebound in the market, but it is not likely to be a permanent one."

At the moment there is no gaining the outlook is very un- Lord Coleridge, president of the annual meeting of the L. Yorkshire Bank said, standpoint 1921 had depression, but he could not be sure of the future. Lancashire has worse storms in the past.

Motor Trade B Sir Herbert Austin, Motor Company, said, certain amount of the motor trade, and the country at present, but that the majority of the trade were selling more than they did in the same year previous to the war.

"I believe," he continued to the bottom of, and that we are going over in our particular in many other trades. H. Dixon, president of the meeting of James Tait cotton manufacturers, must be got moving, there could be any reaction that, with the aid of the way, and reduced, he thought that a very prosperous trade.

Food Prices to F. J. Blackmore, president of the National Chamber of Commerce, said, "I can promise the consumers are going to fall than they are at the. The index figure at the Labor is now 11.10, the highest point it has reached since 1920, and dark clouds of unemployment rapidly pass away after they have passed into the hands of the Government, and the one of the best years has ever been experienced."

Dr. Casswell, Well-Known B

J. A. Casswell, M. D., D. S., passed away on Tuesday afternoon. Dr. Casswell was by many in this city only son of the late Mrs. Dr. Casswell was a lotbetown, P. E. I., 62, graduated in medicine University and for the practice of medicine at autumn, he retired and Digby. Recent letter he was in good health. Surviving are his wife, formerly Mrs. Dr. Casswell, Mrs. (Major) Hamilton, Mrs. Marion Casswell, Mrs. Casswell at home, James of Digby, Fort mourn his loss. Mrs. (Mrs. (Rev.) Patina, Calif., Miss A. of Toronto, and Mrs. of Belleville, was a daughter.